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AUTHOR McTague, Kathleen
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine what children's books have been written which can be used in bibliotherapy for the purpose of helping children and adults become more aware of the struggles, concerns, and personal issues that confront children who have learning disabilities. There is a need for this type of children's literature that deals with learning disabilities in order to help people become more enlightened and more knowledgeable about children with learning problems, as well as give insight and encouragement to children with a learning disability. (Contains 39 references; a 12-item list of organizations and vendors is appended.) (Author/CR)

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CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
BIBLIOTHERAPY AND LEARNING PROBLEMS

by
Kathleen McTague

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree

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The purpose of this study was to determine what children's books have been written which can be used in bibliotherapy for the purpose of helping children and adults become more aware of the struggles, concerns, and personal issues that confront children who have learning disabilities. There is a need for this type of children's literature that deals with learning disabilities in order to help people become more enlightened and more knowledgeable about children with learning problems, as well as give insight and encouragement to children with a learning disability.

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I would like to thank my loving family for their encouragement, especially my husband, John, who wanted me to achieve this goal for myself, my sister, Sharon, who believed I could do it, and my daughters, Elizabeth and Caitlin, who continually teach me as I develop and grow with them and persevere to the end.

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my mother, Mary Elizabeth O'Sullivan, who died this year. She hoped that I would receive my Master of Arts Degree as a Reading Specialist in order to help others to read well ~ her lifetime joy.

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Developing an awareness and an understanding of the needs of children with learning disabilities can be achieved by reading children's literature that deals with these learning problems. Children and adults can both be enlightened as to the struggles, concerns, and personal issues that confront students who have learning disabilities. Children with learning disabilities need to be informed and knowledgeable about their disability because the more they understand their personal needs due to their condition the more they are empowered. Literature can deal effectively, sensitively,and realistically with the emotional concerns and problems of many special needs children. Through stories children can begin to identify with the character in the book and benefit from the association between their experience and the character's whose disability is similar to their own. This personal connection helps them to open up and understand themselves better. These children's books can help to educate and inform the general public in a sensitive and caring way, and help to develop a better understanding of the condition, limitations, and challenges associated with a special needs child.

In 1916, Samuel Crothers prescribed books to his patients who needed help in understanding their problems. He believed that through the

use of books a person's thinking or behavior could change and he labeled this technique "bibliotherapy"(Myracle, 1995).

Caroline Shrodes (1955) believes that bibliotherapy enables a reader to see that their problem can be similar to the character in the story. Thus the reader becomes emotionally involved in the struggle and eventually achieves insight into their own situation.

Jesse Perry (1972) believed that reading can help one develop emotionally and increase social sensitivity, as well as appreciate and understand the life styles of self and others. He believed that books expose childrento a variety of viewpoints. How they deal with the ideas and perceptions gained from their reading is essential to their developing positive human relationships.

Cianciola (1965) supports the idea that reading books can help children cope with life. They can recognize a problem in literature and identify with their own problem and attain greater insight for dealing with it or solving it. A cathartic effect occurs through this identification with the character who solves his/her problem and releases emotional tension.

Schultheis(1970) indicates that children need to be reassured that they are not alone with a particular problem, and their self concept improves with the connection they make to the character in the story. The influence

of powerful books can help the child or group of children deal with situations that are difficult.

Larrick(1982) believes that parents are trying to prepare their children for the future as they grow up by helping them establish a sense of values that will direct their lives. Such goals are hard to measure and to achieve, but since everything in life influences personal growth then books can be a great influence, too. Larrick expands upon this idea in A Parent's Guide To Children's Reading (1982).

> Modern children's stories do not preach sermons, but many of them tell of someone who has a problem. Quite naturally young readers ponder the decision made by the fictional hero or heroine. They put themselves in the same situation and wonder what they would do in the same spot. Thus they may begin to develop a personal sense of values.
>
> Or children may read of people who are different from themselves...They may grow up to appreciate individuals who are different because they have learned to know them through books.
>
> ...They may begin to establish empathy for different kinds of people they meet.
>
> If so, children's reading is helping them grow up as persons who are qualified to live and work with others. Quite literally they are finding themselves and establishing their values through books.
>
> How could these children have handled their worries more effectively? What would have helped each child grow more sympathetic and stronger through these trying times? Questions of this sort might set a child thinking more constructively and creatively, but they must be handled with care.
>
> ...some children will think more critically and act more thoughtfully after reading such books...We can hope that reading a good book and talking it over may bring things into better focus while the child is growing up.

> Teachers need the encouragement and support of parents who want their children to know the world they live in and to take part in making it a better society. Children's books which deal vividly and realistically with current issues can become a positive educational force for individuals and for the community.
>
> ...Don't be afraid to discuss the books that can help to make life more significant for your children(122-126).

Children's literature dealing with learning disabilities can help people through bibliotherapy develop an awareness and an understanding of the problems which confront individuals who have these learning disabilites.

HYPOTHESIS

For the purposes of this study it was hypothesized that a wide range of children's books on learning disabilites would be available and these could be classified by grade as well as disability to aid students, teachers/librarians, parents, and other caregivers in schools and homes.

DEFINITIONS

It is important to define terms so that misunderstanding does not result.

1. Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) A neurological disorder in a person of average or above-average intelligence that includes symptoms such as short attention span, distractibility, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity. These children can experience trouble focusing on just one thing, paying attention, thinking before acting, keeping still, keeping track of things, and learning in school.

2. Dyslexia. A disorder in children and adults who, despite conventional classroom experience, fail to attain the language skills of reading, writing, and spelling commensurate with their intellectual abilities. There can be problems remembering and recognizing written letters,

numbers, and words; may result in backwards reading or poor handwriting.

3. Learning Disability (LD). A disorder in understanding or using spoken or written language which can lead to difficulties in learning to read, write, or do mathematics which cause problems in school achievement. Individuals have average or above average intelligence. The disorder is not due to mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environmental, economic, or cultural disadvantage.

PROCEDURES

In order to locate children's works of literature that deal with learning disabilities, the researcher had to contact various sources to find out what books are available for different learning disabilities.

One book was chosen as an example to illustrate the many insights that an author can offer the reader as to the concerns of one with a learning disability and to demonstrate how a teacher or parent can use this book in bibliotherapy.

The researcher then read several books to explore how the author exposes the reader to the various problems and issues that are related to someone having a learning disability; identified the learning disability that it addresses; classified it as to age-level appeal; wrote a brief description for each of the books read and the insight that can be gained about the learning disability. In this research there was an emphasis on finding literature that deals with dyslexia.

Finally the researcher established a list of all the children's books that were recommended by the resources contacted with an emphasis placed on attention deficit/hyperactive disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia.

RESULTS

Resources available

The following were found to be effective resources in establishing the availability of books for different learning disabilities:

A) The public libraries in the surrounding communities

B) The children's section of bookstores, such as, B. Dalton, Barnes and Nobles, Encore and Waldenbooks

C) Agencies and organizations that focus on particular learning disabilities
The following are representative of these groups:
Attention Deficit Disorder Association
Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders
Council For Learning Disabilities
ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education
International Dyslexia Association
Learning Disabilities Association of America
NationalCenter for Learning Disabilities
National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
National Parent Network on Disabilities
Parents and Educators Resource Center

D) Vendors
ADD WareHouse
Paperbacks For Educators
Amazon.com

E) Professionals in the field who would be knowledgeable about such children's books.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Literature that deals with a specific learning disability as an underlining theme can expose its readers to a greater understanding of the disorder. It can go into the treatments for it, and the social problems that can arise from having a learning disability.

The case histories can give greater insight into the learning disability while personalizing the information. The manifestations are often times described in a way that is relevant to the reader who is experiencing the same condition.

One learning disability, dyslexia, is a brain-based disorder that causes reading problems and difficulty using oral and written language. Dyslexia can be treated in various ways; strategies and learning skills for it are often incorporated into a story by the author. Many challenges are faced by those who are experiencing a learning disability such as dyslexia which need to be shared with others.

Susan Hampshire, for example, interviewed sixty people for her book, Every Letter Counts. She recounts their terrible struggles and experiences in English schools at the hands of ignorant educators and mean-spirited fellow students because these students had learning difficulties that were not understood.

So many of these people who were interviewed believed that they were dumb and felt so humiliated. The common bond that these people shared was that they felt relief when their problem was diagnosed. Many of these people expressed their joy in finding out for themselves that they had other strengths that could help them do well in life. Often their learning disability had made them braver and more courageous in order to fight to succeed.

Every Letter Counts was written to inspire and teach others, whether they be students with or without learning disabilities, parents, or teachers. They receive an insightful and sensitive look at people with dyslexia.

In order for children to become more understanding of those who have learning disabilities, books have been written to help others to be accepting and aware of these people whom they will meet throughout their lives. It is necessary for students to express their positive and negative feelings about situations that they have experienced. To be able to explore these issues is healthy for students with learning disabilities. Books are an avenue to use in bibliotherapy for such insight, self-discovery, and enlightenment.

The book, Egg-Drop Blues by Jacqueline Turner Banks, illustrates how insightful a story can be by unfolding some of the problems encountered by someone with a learning problem.

Egg-Drop Blues by Jacqueline Turner Banks.
Houghton Mifflin Co.Boston, 1995

This book of fiction deals with an African-American twin boy who is in middle school. His name is Judge Jenkins and he is dyslexic. He is doing poorly in his science class and needs to pull up his grade by participating in a science competition with his twin brother, Jury.

The learning problems and concerns that Judge has open up issues that any dyslexic student could have to deal with in their struggle to learn. Judge is very sensitive about how he is perceived by others. His brother teases him a lot and when he calls him stupid, Judge overpersonalizes, instead of not letting it bother him the way the other kids do. Jury says it to everyone and does not really mean to be offensive by saying it.

The story demonstrates the self destructive script played in his head and how Judge secretly struggles, for example: "I don't talk about grades because I don't want to let them know how hard it is for me."(p.9)

Another example shows insight into his own self analysis:

> I tried to listen in school. It's easier for me to remember stuff I hear than stuff I read, but most teachers don't hold us responsible for it. Usually they only tell us the things we can read in the book. I have a hard time reading. First of all, I read slower than most people I know. I can't for the life of me figure out how some people can read so fast.(p.11)

This information helps the reader to know the thoughts and learning

problems that a dyslexic child is experiencing, as well as giving insight to the teachers for strategies. Comments are beneficial for suggesting the reasons why someone does act in a certain way, for example: "Maybe poor memory is another symptom of this dyslexia thing. Jury thinks I talk too much, but a lot of times the only way I can remember something is when I hear myself saying it out loud." (p.15)

Banks, the author, gives solid advice about issues of intelligence and conflicts, for example: " "Hard-pressed" is one of those expressions I have trouble with. Does it mean it would be difficult or easy for her to give me a D? My brother uses a lot of expressions like that and it's not just annoying, it's confusing." (p.24)

A discussion between Judge(J) and the teacher(Y) follows:

T What are your feelings about the trimester so far?
J It's been difficult.
T How so?
J I think I know what's going on and then we have a test and I end up failing it. The stuff you talk about is actually fairly easy. But then you ask those trick questions on the tests.
T Sometimes when you have learning problems, questions just seem like they're trick questions.
J Great. Now I have to deal with another person in the school thinking about me like I was some kind of mental cripple.(pp.24-25)

The first person narration is open and conversational for the reader to connect better with the characters throughout the story, for example:

> I was disgusted with myself for taking so much time away from the project. Unlike some dyslexics, I don't have a big problem focusing on a task. If I don't have a lot of distraction, I can zone in on whatever I'm doing. My problem is shifting. If I'm distracted, it takes me a while to mentally "get back" to whatever it was I was doing. (pp. 51-2)

The settings are realistic as aspects of Judge's personality are revealed in the story in a natural unfolding, for example, when Judge (J) and Jury (j) have a conversation:

> j I'll go get the confetti, Einstein.
> J Hey, I asked you not to do that.
> j This is the last time I'm going to say it. I don't think you're dumb, stupid, or any of that. If you ask me, I don't even think you have a learning disability. I just think you try too hard. I am not going to stop calling you names related to intelligence because it hurts your feelings. To thy own self be true.
> J He went to get the plastic egg and the confetti- I smiled. He doesn't think I have a learning disability. He said it was the last time he was going to tell me, but as best I can remember, it was the first. So when he calls me stupid he means it the same way he means it when he calls the rest of the posse members stupid. I sat back in my chair with my hands clasped behind my head.(p.55)

There are passages that demonstrate how he compares his learning style with another person's, as he admires their ability and ease, for example:

> * "God, I wish I could talk like Angela", admiring her intelligent way of speaking.(p.59)
>
> ** Although now I know why I have such a hard time following football games on television, it's still very confusing. One team has the ball, they do something, the other team does something else, and at the same time the announcer guys are talking about what the guy with the ball did while he was still in college. I can watch it in person, but if I have to watch it on television I have to turn the sound off.(p.63)

*** Fast-reading Jury read the box and was making his comments before I knew what was happening. "Look, he sent an article." I scanned it. It was something some doctor had written about helping the learning disabled child. My father had underlined a part that mentioned buying the kid a tape recorder. Jury took the article from my hand. "Check this out: Daddy underlined it. It says kids who remember better by hearing should read and record their text chapters and play them back later. I guess he thinks you should do it too."(p.64)

These are the ways the author is passing on useful strategies for dyslexic students. More examples from the story are:

* "I went upstairs to study at our desk."(p.73)

** "I reread the five chapters that made up the unit and listened to the tape while I was going to sleep."(p.74)

*** "I hate when teachers don't type their tests. Most of them have pretty decent writing, but it's confusing enough without adding handwriting to the problem."(p.76)

**** "But in spite of the time warp problem, stupid recording helped."

Throughout the story Judge is struggling with low self-esteem but the reader becomes aware that the character is a very observant person who is a good, thoughtful, likeable and determined boy. Judge finally realizes after winning the science competition that he really is capable of achieving despite his struggles with learning. This story is humorous, interesting, sensitive, and true-to-life; a good choice to use in bibliotherapy for those who want to discuss the subject of dyslexia.

Books available on various learning disabilities were analyzed and described here, indicating the learning disability in each book, the age level preference,and the helpful insight that can be gained by the reader.

Review of Children's Literature that deals with Learning Disabilities

Adler, C.S. Kiss the Clown. Clarion, 1986.
Reading Level: Grades 7-9.

This story centers around Viki, a young teenage girl, living in Guatemala with her parents. Her father is a missionary there. Family discord arises and Viki is removed from the situation by being sent to her aunt's home in New York State.

She becomes involved with two brothers, Marc and Joel, who are profoundly different. She dates Marc, an honor student, who wants to be a lawyer. While Joel is in special education classes because he is dyslexic. He is not doing well and argues with his ambitious parents who fear he has no direction. Viki finds Joel the nicer and more sincere brother, and becomes attracted to him.

Joel shares his concern about his reading problem and decides to improve his skills. He has high hopes of having a relationship with Viki when she breaks up with Marc. Viki is called back to Guatemala, however, and they will both have to wait until she returns.

The story addresses the fact that one must take responsibility for one's own learning disability. The story also points out to parents how important it is to avoid academic pressure that is unfairly stressed when one does have a child who has a learning disability.

Aiello, Barbara, and Jeffrey Shulman. Secrets Aren't Always for Keeps. Illustrated by Loel Barr. Twenty-First Century, 1988.
Reading Level: Grades 3-5

Jennifer has her penpal, Kay, from Australia come to stay with her. The problem is that Jennifer has been hiding from Kay the fact that she has a learning disability. Her handwriting is too difficult to read.

She plans to tell her penpal about her learning disability through a pillow-talk game whereby they would exchange sealed notes with their most personal secrets. This would avoid face-to-face confrontation. But before Jennifer's plan evolves, the girls are forced to share the truth. It happens that one day in class Jennifer slips out to go to the resource room unaware that Kay follows her there. Kay shares with her the fact that she knew about the learning disability because the mothers had discussed this together before Kay left her home. Kay tells her that her friendship is sincere and she can trust her with such secrets.

The story models for others how kind, understanding, and trusting a child can be towards a friend who has a disability. It makes a person aware of the role of friendship and the need to share, trust, and respect each other's concerns, and that there is no shame involved with having a learning disabilty.

Cassedy, Sylvia. M.E. and Morton. Crowell, 1987.
Reading Level: 5-8

This story centers on a family that is not accepting nor dealing well with the learning disability of the fourteen year old boy, Morton. He has no friends until Polly, a new neighbor, moves in and becomes his friend. His sister, eleven year old Mary Ellen, becomes friends with Polly, too, and is surprised that Polly enjoys her brother.

Only after a serious accident that happened to Morton does the family rethink their treatment towards Morton, from demeaning him to appreciating him.

This story exposes the pain of those with learning disabilities and the awful cross they carry by the ignorance, meanness and indifference of others. It also shows how people can change in attitude and learn to see the special goodness in others.

DeClements, Barthe. Sixth Grade Can Really Kill You. Viking. 1985
Reading Level: Grades 4-7.

The main character, Helen, is frustrated because she is not able to read. Her behavior in class is bad and her grades are poor. Her mother does not want her in special education because tests show that Helen is above average in intelligence. She feels special education is an embarrassment.

A new teacher wants Helen to try out the special ed class. Helen's dad supports this decision and it proves to be the best decision. Helen's mom has to learn to be open to help, regardless of what others may think or say.

In this story, Helen realizes she is not "dumb" but only needs extra help with her reading problems. Advice for parents who resist appropriate help is dealt with effectively as Helen's success in reading skills grows and she is able to participate in a mainstream environment.

Fleming, Elizabeth. Believe the Heart. Strawberry Hill, 1984.
Reading Level: Grades 6-12.

Elizabeth writes about herself and her five children who were all diagnosed with hereditary dyslexia. She shares her personal struggles while in school where she was considered stupid because of a poor ability to read and spell.

After World War II she graduated from high school and married. She and her husband struggled together to make ends meet but during her fifth pregnancy he abamdoned her and their children. Elizabeth was left to hold the entire family together.

She survived by receiving help through counseling which was enlightening and by taking courses which improved her learning disability. She was then able to help her children.

Their personal accounts and struggles are told by each of them. Being considered different from others is difficult for children, as well as being misunderstood.

This book lets the reader see how such a learning disability can be shared by family members but how it does not have to defeat a person's success. Self-understanding is key to their success as a speech pathologist, librarian, architect, and college graduates can all attest .

Foley, June. Falling in Love is No Snap. Delacorte, 1986.
Reading Level: Grades 6-9

This light romance between high school students, Alexandra and Heracles, is special. She wants to be a photographer while her divorced mother wants her in business. Heracles' widowed father owns the deli and does not know his son wants to be a scientist and not the deli operator.

Heracles has a hyperactive younger brother, Theo, who has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder(ADHD). Heracles

wants him to be photographed by Alexandra. He is so restless and energetic however, that Alexandra has difficulty getting the camera in focus because of his condition. The frustration in having to deal with people who have ADHD is experienced in this story.

Each teenager has trouble communicating to his/her parent about the future goals. As a favor to Heracles, Alex takes Theo to her home so that her mother, a learning specialist, can try to help the child. Theo responds very well to the instructions given to him by Alexandra's mother and to the fact that he must take his medicine regularly for his ADHD.

This story deals with the need for family members and friends to be open and honest with each other. It demonstrates how a learning disability can be put under control, and success can be attained through appropriate help.

Froelich, Margaret. Reasons to Stay. Houghton, 1986.
Reading Level: Grades 6-9.

In 1906, three poor children suffer at the hands of a mean drunken father. Their pregnant mother dies and they are left with stressful circumstances. Their father is threatened by authorities for his actions so he decides to take his family away. They are caught in a storm and the children are helped by a family that live nearby.

The children in the story are twelve-year old Babe, who seeks out information concerning her past and comes to reconcile the pain and anguish; her thirteen-year old sister Florence, who has suffered from dyslexia and has hated school; and the seven-year old brother who has suffered abuse at the hands of his horrible father. The foster parents that come into their lives offer love and security, accepting them for who they are and helping them adjust to life with support and care.

The reader is left with the feeling that Florence will begin to tackle her learning disability in a constructive way because her supportive environment will finally allow for it.

Gehret, Jeanne. Eagle Eyes: A Child's Guide to Paying Attention. Verbal Images Press, 1990. Reading Leavel: Grades 2-6.

This is a story about Ben, a young boy, who is very overwhelmed by all the sights and sounds that always compete for his attention. He is very frustrated with himself because it seems he always disturbs and ruins events

and special family moments with his clumsiness and impulsiveness. He compares himself to his sister who seems to do everything just the right way.

His father finally brings him to a doctor who diagnoses his condition as Attention Deficit Disorder(ADD). The doctor shows Ben some tricks to help him, for example, to remember to bring his school needs for each day Ben sings a song, to relax at bedtime Ben listens to soft music, and to help focus better Ben takes medicine prescribed by the doctor.

Ben feels better about himself because the suggestions from the doctor are helping. His dad always told him he had eagle eyes because he observes everything. Ben gets a chance to show his dad how helpful his eagle eyes can be in an emergency situation. Ben learns to appreciate his own uniqueness.

Gehret, Jeanne. The Don't-give-up Kid: And Learning Differences. Verbal Images Press, 1996. Reading Level: Grades 2-6.

Alex is a young boy who is dyslexic. He loves to invent and wants to be like Thomas Edison when he grows up. He keeps looking for ways to solve his invention problems which is why his parents call him the Don't-give-up-Kid, but not when it comes to reading or behaving well in school. He feels like he is stupid because people make fun of him when he tries to read and mispronounces words.

Alex is taken to a psychologist who is able to help him, his parents, and teachers. Upon the psychologist's recommendation Alex is placed in a special reading class with appropriate reading material and is given special individualized attention. His confidence and self-esteem improve as he realizes he is not stupid but that he just learns differently. He needs to learn the best ways for himself to read and to remember never to give up.

Strategies for teachers are incorporated into the story and examples of other people who have achieved in their lifetime despite their learning problem like Alex's hero, Thomas Edison.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room. Dell, 1984. Reading Level: Grades 2-4.

Richard Best is repeating the second grade in Ms. Rooney's class. He calls himself "Beast" because of his strong minded opinions and attitudes toward everything in class. He needs special help in reading which he is self-conscious about receiving until he has a breakthrough in his reading. He is able to recognize familiar words and he is able to spell what he hears. Class-

mates help him with clues in spelling and his maturity and behavior improve as his focus improves.

It is a lesson in how helpful we can be to our classmates by the knowledge that we really have to share. It also shows in a positive way how important the special education classes are and how reading disabilities can be greatly improved through the extra help. Lastly it brings out the fact that a person's attitude, confidence and self-esteem can be greatly improved by the care and attention of others and the self-satisfaction in personal achievement.

Greenwald, Sheila. Will the Real Gertrude Hollings Please Stand Up?
Little, Brown, 1983.
Reading Level: Grades 4-6.

This story centers on eleven-year old Gertrude who has to be put up by her cousin, Albert, and his family while her parents are on a three-week vacation to Greece. Albert, a superachiever, calls her derogatory names because she has dyslexia and needs extra help.

His parents assign topics for dinner conversation each night which requires doing research at the library. Albert is impressed when Gertrude seems knowledgeable about Greek Mythology. She pretends to have arcane powers and tells him that his future siblings will replace him. This causes him great stress and much frustration. Many humorous events unfold in this lively story.

Gertrude's dyslexic problem is understood by her own mother who is dyslexic. She supports her and shares with her the fact that many famous people had to deal with the same learning disability, too. Knowing that other successful and accomplished people have achieved despite a learning disability is consoling and inspiring to all people.

Hansen, Joyce. Yellow Bird and Me. Clarion, 1986.
Reading Level: Grades 4-6.

This is a story about a girl named Doris who misses her friend Amir because he moved away. In the story she writes to him and tells him of her concerns. She is asked by Yellow Bird, the class clown, to help him study. Bird has dyslexia and needs special help. The story points out how smart and talented Bird is and yet he still needs extra assistance because of his disability.

Yellow Bird's teacher is not very helpful in understanding him and she makes some poor decisions that hurt Yellow Bird. The teacher learns from the special ed teacher about dyslexia which gives her knowledge, advice and insight as to how to help these dyslexic students achieve.

This is a story about friends reaching out to each other; each one offering their help and advice. They model for the reader how necessary it is to first look inside a person before you judge him and then see how you can help the person.

Kennemore, Tim. Wall of Words. Faber, 1983.
Reading Level: Grades 5-7.

This is an amusing story of four pleasant sisters. Various problems arise but, in particular, one of the sisters, Kerry, is so upset about school that she becomes sick. Through the help of a teacher Kerry realizes that she has a learning disability which has caused her to have difficulty reading. Kerry's teacher tells her that Kerry is dyslexic, as well as the teacher herself. Kerry's health improves as she realizes that she is not retarded.

This story enlightens and comforts those associated with dyslexia. It is important to know that a person is not alone with a learning disability and that others have dealt with similar problems and can be a source of support.

Kline, Suzy. Herbie Jones. Illustrated by Richard Williams. Putnam, 1985.
Reading Level: Grades 2-4.

Herbie, a third grader, is in the lowest reading group in class. He does poorly on the phonics worksheets and he hates the name of the reading group, the Apples. He chooses to read Charlotte's Web because of his love for spiders. After receiving extra help from the reading supervisor, Herbie is promoted. He still helps his buddy change the group's name from the Apples to the Spiders.

Here, in this story, reading problems are identified early enough and dealt with appropriately so that learning problems are prevented.

This is a beginning of a series for young readers who would like to follow the adventures of Herbie.

Marek, Margot. Different, Not Dumb. Illustrated by photos by Barbara Kirk, Franklin Watts, 1985.
Reading Level: Grades 2-3.

Mike, a second grader, has trouble reading. He is placed in a remedial reading program and learns not to worry about what others may think. He knows that he is progressing and that is all that really matters.

One day a box falls out of a truck on the road. Mike is able to sound out the big word on the box "Explosives". Police come to remove it and everyone compliments Mike for his good reading skills.

This book points out the worthwhile reasons for learning to read and why sticking to a learning problem and dealing with it are the only answers.

Martin, Ann M. Yours Truly, Shirley. Holiday, 1988.
Reading Level: Grades 3-5.

Shirley, a fourth grader, has to deal with many insecurities because of her learning disability, dyslexia. Shirley fools around as a cover up to these problems. A new teacher, however, recognizes her need and helps her to find her strength.

The story deals with a personal issue that Shirley struggles with a lot. She feels inferior to her gifted college-age brother who skipped the fourrth grade while she fears having to repeat that grade. Her newly adopted sister, Jackie, who is Vietnamese and her own age, makes incredible progress in school which threatens Shirley and causes jealousy.

Her teacher reinforces to Shirley that she is a smart girl and needs to pay attention and try harder. Shirley reveals that she does try hard but she feels it gets her nowhere. She is worried and mentally stressed because she compares herself to her brillant brother too much. Examples of Shirley's anxiety and how she sees words and how hard she tries to concentrate are brought out in the story. Eventually Shirley finds success in her art and is elected to be class artist which satisfies Shirley and helps heal her relationship with Jackie.

In this warm, friendly story the teacher tries to encourage Shirley. He makes her aware that dyslexia does not mean that she is stupid but rather that she lacks skills because of her learning disability. He helps her see that she has strengths to enable her to be a successful person.

Shreve, Susan. The Flunking of Joshua T. Bates. Knopf, 1984.
Reading Level: Grades 2-4.

Joshua has to repeat third grade which is a terrible insult to him. The first week of school he lashes out but then settles down to work. He helps other kids in his third grade class with their work. He establishes a good relationship with his new teacher and works hard on his own reading. His goal is to be promoted to the fourth grade before the school year is over

He achieves his goal though he actually feels sad at the thought of leaving a class and a teacher whom he has grown close to that fall.

Through his mother, Joshua realizes that he was a student who just had not learned to read well enough to move on to the next grade. Eventually he does accomplish to attain the reading skills necessary to move successfully on with his peers. The results were based on maturation over the summer, special individual attention from the teacher, the right attitude, and support from school, family and friends.

This is a good book for those slow learners who might have fallen behind in skills but with remediation can improve successful.

Voigt, Cynthia. Dicey's Song. Atheneum, 1982.
Reading Level: Grades 5-8.

In this story four children are to be adopted by their grandmother whom they come to live with in Maryland. Their own mother is in a psychiatric institution.

The children have problems. Maybeth, an eight-year old, has great difficulty reading, but she has musical talent. Her sister, Dicey, earns the money to pay for Maybeth's piano lessons. Sammy, a seven-year old, is being teased by the children in school and though quiet, gets into fights. James, a ten-year old, is gifted and he plans to help his sister with her reading.

Their mother dies right after the adoption was completed. Her ashes are buried on the family property.

In this story Dicey matures and grows. She appreciates her sister Maybeth's strengths and believes that Maybeth is shy and slow, not retarded. The brother's willingness to help Maybeth in her phonics and Dicey's sacrifice are great examples to the reader as to the influence that siblings can have on each other. This ability to make a difference in a brother or sister's life is truly applauded.

Children's Literature on Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder

Carlson, Nancy, Sit Still! Viking Press, 1996. Ages: 3-8.

Corman, Cliff, M.D. and Trevino, Esther, M.F.C.C. Eukee the Jumpy, Jumpy Elephant. Specialty Press, 1955. Ages: 3-7.

Dixon, E. and Kathleen Nadeau, Learning to Slow Down and PayAttention. Chesapeake Psychological Services, 1991. Ages: 6-14.

DLugokinski, Eric, Ph.D., The Boys and Girls' Book of Dealing with Feelings A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 5-10.

Fisher, Gary,PhD, and Cumming, Rhoda,EdD.,The Survival Guide for Kids with LD*(Learning Differences),A.D.D. Warehouse, 1990.Ages: 6-14.

Galvin, Matthew,M.D., Otto Learns About His Medicine. Magination Press, 1995. Ages: 5-19.

Gehret, Jeanne, The Don't Give-Up Kid. Verbal Images Press, 19 Fox Hill Drive, Fairport, New York 14450, 1991. Ages: 5-12.

Gehret, Jeanne, Eagle Eyes, A Child's Eye View of Attention Deficit Disorder. Verbal Images, 1991. Ages: 5-12.

Gehret, Jeanne, I'm Somebody Too. Verbal Images Press, 1992. Ages: 9 and older.

Gordon, Michael, Jumpin Johnny, Get Back to Work. GSI Publications, 1991. Ages: 5-10.

Gordon, Michael, My Brother's a World Class Pain, A Sibling's Guide to ADHD/Hyperactivity. GSI Publications, 1992. Ages: 5-10.

Gordon, Michael, I Would If I Could, A Teenagers Guide to ADHD/ Hyperactivity,. GSI Publications, 1994. Ages: 13-17.

Ingersoll, Barbara, PH.D., Distant Drums, Different Drummers: A Guide for Young People with ADHD. A.D.D.Warehouse., Ages: 8-14.

Janover, Caroline, Zipper,the Kid with ADHD. Woodbine House, 1997. Ages: 8-12.

Levine, Melvin, All Kinds of Minds. Educators Publishing Service, 75 Moulton Street, Cambridge, MA. 02138, 1993. Ages: 5-13.

Levine, Melvin, M.D., Keeping A Head In School : A Student's Book About Learning Abilities and Learning Disorders. Educators Publishing Service, 1990. Ages: 9-15.

Lite, Lori, A Boy and a Bear: The Children's Relaxation Book. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 3-10.

Lite, Lori, The Affirmation Web: A Believe in Yourself Adventure. A.D.D. Warehouse 1998. Ages: 5-11.

Loski, Diana, The Boy On The Bus. Writers Press, 1994. Ages: K-5.

Moser, Adolph, Ed.D., Don't Despair on Thursday! The Chilren's Grief-Management Book. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 4-10.

Moser, Adolph, Ed.D., Don't Feed the Monster on Tuesday! The Children's Self-Esteem Book. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 4-10.

Moser, Adolph, Ed.D., Don't Pop Your Cork on Mondays! The Children's Anti-Stress Book. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 4-10.

Moser, Adolph, Ed.D., Don't Rant & Rave on Wednesdays! The children's Anger-Control Book. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 4-10.

Moss, Deborah, Shelly, The Hyperactive Turtle. Woodbine House, 1989. Ages: 3-7.

Nadeau, Kathleen, Ph.D., Learning To Slow Down And Pay Attention: A Book for Kids About ADD. Magination Press, 1997. Ages: 6-11.

Quinn, Patricia O., M.D., Adolescents and ADD: Gaining the Advantage. A Magination Press. Ages: 13-18.

Quinn, P.O. and Stern, J., Putting on the Brakes. A Young Peoples Guide to Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. A Magination Press, 1991. Ages: 8-12.

Parker, Roberta N., Making the Grade: An Adolescent's Struggle with Add ADD Warehouse, 300 Northwest 70th Avenue, Suite 102 , Plantation, FL 33317 Ages: 9-14.

Parker, Roberta N., Slam Dunk: A Young Boy's Struggle with ADD. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 8-12.

Romain, Trevor, How to Do Homework without Throwing Up. A.D.D. Warehouse. Ages: 8-13.

Shapiro, Lawrence, Ph.D., Jumpin Jake Settles Down: A Workbook to Help Impulsive Children Learn to Think Before They Act. Center for Applied Psychology, 1994. Ages: 6-10.

Shapiro, Lawrence R., Ph.D. Sometimes I Drive My Mom Crazy, But I know She's Crazy About Me. A Self-Esteem Book for ADHD Children Center for Applied Psychology, 1993. Ages: 6-12.

Stern, Judith, M.A., and Uzi Ben-Ami, Ph.D., Many Ways to Learn: Young People's Guide to Learning Disabilities. A.D.D. Warehouse, 1998. Ages: 8-13.

Children's Literature on Dyslexia

Abeel, Samantha, Reach for the Moon. Pfeifer-Hamilton, Duluth, Minnesota 1994. Ages

Barrie, Barbara, Adam Zigzag. Delacorte Press, New York, 1994. Ages: 8-15.

Behrmann, Polly, Why Is It Me? Seedlings Press, Altadena, CA, 1994. Ages:

Betancourt, Jeanne, My Name Is Brian/Brian. Scholastic, Inc., New York, 1993. Ages:

Dahl, Ronald, The Vicar of Nibbleswicke. Puffin, 1991. Ages: 8-12.

Davis, Ronald, The Gift of Dyslexia: Why Some of the Smartest People Can't Read and How They Can Learn. Berkley, 1997.

Dunstan, Ann, Andrew An Adventure in Learning. Engravers Limited, Bermuda, 1991.

Dwyer, Kathleen M., What Do You Mean I Have A Learning Disability? Walker and Company, 720 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019 1991. Ages: 7-13.

Gehret, Jeanne, Learning Disabilities and The Don't-give-up Kid. Verbal Image Press, Fairport, New York, 1990. Ages: 5-12.

Griffths, Anita, My Name is Anita and I an a Dyslexic. University Editions, Inc., 1991.

Hampshire, Susan, Susan's Story. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1982.

Innes, Paris, Defeating Dyslexia, A Boy's Story. Trafalgar Square, North Pomfret, Vermont, 1990.

Janover, Caroline, Josh A Boy with Dyslexia. Waterfront Books, Burlington, Vermont, 1988.

Janover, Caroline, The Worst Speller in Jr. High. Free Spirit Publishing, Inc. 400 First Avenue North, Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401, 1995. Ages: 12-15.

Levinson, Marilyn, And Don't Bring Jeremy. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1985.

Root, Ann and Linda Gladden, Charlie's Challenge. U.S.A. Printmaster Press, Temple, Texas, 1995.

Ryden, Michael, Dyslexia, How Would I Cope? Jessica Kingsley Publishers, Philadelphia, PA., 1992.

Smith, Sally L., Different Is Not Bad: A Book About Disabilities. Sopris West, 1140 Boston Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501, 1994. Ages: 11-16.

Troyer, Phil H., Father Bede's Misfit. York Press, Parkton, MD., 1986.

Vail, Priscilla L., About Dyslexia Unraveling the Myth. Modern Learning Press, Rosemont, N.J. 1990.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The hypothesis states the belief that there would be a wide range of children's books on learning disabilities which can help children and adults become enlightened through bibliotherapy. This hypothesis was accepted as correct as the study shows there is a wide range of chilren's books on learning disabilities; however, these books are not readily available to the general public. Most of the books were not available at the local libraries, college libraries, not at the book stores in the area of Essex County and Union County. The books were attainable by ordering through special educational catalogs and ordering through companies that sell these books on the Internet.

The need to make these books easily available must be addressed by the professionals in the field of education so that children, parents, and anyone else interested in reading about learning disabilities can find these books without any difficulty.

RELATED LITERATURE

Literature has a powerful effect upon the reader by deepening one's understandings of self and others. The use of literature as a tool for seeking knowledge and gaining an appreciation about problems and issues is an excellent way to grow and develop. Literature can be a source for realistic problem-solving abilities as well as dealing with everyday emotions.

Johnson (1984) believes that "the term bibliotherapy has come to mean the guided use of literature to improve thinking skills and creative problem solving, to assist in emotional development and to increase social sensitivity."

Books have always been viewed by adults as powerful tools to guide the thinking of children, while strengthening their character, shaping their behavior and trying to help work out their problems (DiSturco, 1984). Lauren Myracle (1995) stated that Samuel Crothers coined the technique "bibliotherapy" back in 1916 when he prescribed books for patients who needed help in addressing their problems. The application of bibliotherapy for children was introduced in 1946 because parents were concerned about the type of books their children were reading. Book lists were eventually published indicating those books which were acceptable for children to read as well as indexing the books of moral value. These books were seen as the ones to shape and strengthen children's behavior. As the world grew more

complex, the problems that children had changed dramatically. Bibliotherapy was no longer addressing a sentimental nature, but rather a realistic one (Myracle, 1995).

Henry Olsen (1975) believed that bibliotherapy was helpful in the modern world because of all the real-world problems that kids confronted. He thought this technique allowed the child to identify and work through a problem as the child's self-concept developed for better future adjustments.

Bibliotherapy programs for children have been implemented over the years to help learning disabled youngsters and emotionally handicapped ones, as well as "normal" children to positively influence their self-concepts and address their special needs. It has been used as one type of therapy that can be effective and works well in conjunction with other therapies (Pardeck, 1990).

Bibliotherapy is a way for a child who has a learning disability to identify with a character in a story who might have similar problems as he does and thus he is able to appreciate his own problems through this new insight (Schulthesis, 1972).

Researchers agree that a child can gain greater insight into himself or

others when an interaction takes place between the reader and literature (Newell, 1957, Lindahl and Koch, 1952). One can approach the complexities and realities of life through literature as it deepens the experience and a human connection is provided between the issues and the person (Sadker, 1977).

Brooks (1950) believed that developmental values depicted in literature often acted as catalysts for change in readers' behaviors, thinking, and their feelings.

Bibliotherapy can be used for guidance purposes in meeting the needs of slow learners (Witty,1964). Sara Lundsteen (1972) proposes the use of children's literature for problem sloving so that an understanding of the world and one's fellow man is enhanced and human problems are relevant to children.

Cianciola (1969) thinks bibliotherapy is a guidance tool that teachers should use in order to help children handle the difficult problems that they are experiencing in their life. When one recognizes a similar problem and reads about the solution to it, then the reader has gained new insights into his own problem and is then better equipped to take a step forward toward solving this problem. An adult, being parent, teacher, or counselor, can use literature with children for preventive bibliotherapy. This theory being that

the child is able to make a satisfactory adjustment when a problem eventually arises in his life because he has read about one similar in literature. The results from the process of interaction between the personality of the reader and literature is generally theorized in terms of identification, catharsis and insight. Identification is an almost universal experience when one connects with a real or fictional character in literature. The catharsis occurs as the reader achieves identification with the character who is able to work through his problem and then releases his built up emotional tension, thus the reader is purged of his own emotional tension. The reader is then able to see more clearly the motivation of his own behavior and he is able to make a more intellectual approach to his problem. When the intellectual perception and emotional drive are integrated, then the last component of bibliotherapy, which is insight, is achieved.

The three interdependent stages of self development in bibliotherapy: identification, catharsis, and insight, have been continually recognized with the process of bibliotherapy(Adderholdt-Elliott and Eller, 1989; Hebert, 1991, Hoaglund,1972; Lenkowsky and Lenkowsky, 1978; Manning and Manning, 1984; Russell and Russell, 1979).

Bibliotherapy is viewed as the guided reading of written materials to

help the reader grow in self-awareness and thus play an instrumental role in helping people think about their own circumstances through critical inquiry(Harris and Hodges, 1995).

Hunsburger (1985) recommended the use of novels in order to understand what children experience as they learn to read. Believing that since all authors were once children, they then can allow us to see through the their eyes as child life is revealed to the reader based on the author's memory, insight, and imagination.

Hildreth (1992) believed that children's literature can be used to make teachers more aware of the students with special needs. When books are written about young people with learning disabilities, one is able to examine the cause of the learning disability, hopefully to understand the experience of academic failure, the need for remediation, the affective development that comes about, and how the family reacts to the child and the situation. Reading such literature can help enhance one's knowledge and make more connections by complementing and reinforcing what one already knows.

To engage students in the process of bibliotherapy, Daisey (1993) used two procedures: reading aloud selected passages, and sharing the personal feelings of the students and their reactions to the special books that were chosen.

The use of bibliotherapy was proposed by Morawski(1995) because she thought that through the involvement with books, teachers can gain insight into their reading-disabled students, as well as gain significant knowledge about themselves with their own insecurities related to the reading process. Exploring one's own perceptions and actions can be aided first by examining the behaviors and related motives of another. Teachers can be supportive by recollecting personal incidents of learning to read from their own lives (Brunhuber, 1995).

Self-examination which is an intellectual as well as an emotional process can be helped by reading books authored by compassionate people who have written about their personal struggles to know themselves (Jersild, 1955). The reader identifies with the character as the problem is worked through and the emotions are released (Cianciolo, 1965). Some readers will experience feelings of satisfaction because of their successful early literacy experiences while other readers will experience anxiety and apprehension because of their unsuccessful memories of learning to read (Morawski and Brunhuber, 1995).

The insight is attained when the reader empathizes with the character, understands his own motivations better, and tries to apply his new

awareness to his own life (Hoaglund, 1972).

The way students initially respond to the text is intensely personal. They try to find connections between the text and their own lives. The search for them is to find an identity with the messages, characters, and ideas (Appleyard, 1991).

In order to foster the acquisition of literacy skills and knowledge, it is important that the parent and child interact with each other in the home. Research supports the positive effects to be a heightened motivation on the part of the children with a desire to learn to read books (Haupt, Larsen, and Robinson, 1996).

Children are not only developing their literary competencies when they read, understand, and respond to the stories, but also satisfying the need for narratives which gives shape and meaing to their own lives as individuals and members of their communities (Stote, 1994).

The research on bibliotherapy supports its use in helping children and adults to open their minds and explore their emotions and thoughts in order to come to a greater understanding and awareness of the issues concerning those with learning disabilities.

More people are being diagnosed as having learning disabilities. Lerner (1993) believes the reasons as to why this increase is so significant

are that more people are now aware and better informed about learning disabilities. The improvement of assessment techniques continues, thus making diagnoses of learning disabilities more reliable, and a general acceptance and tolerance from the public because they have an awareness.

Reading disabilities make-up the largest percentage of those with learning disabilities but academic learning disabilities also includes the areas of math, writing, and spelling. The nonacademic learning disabilities are perceptual problems, language problems, memory problems(auditory and visual), phonological processing and visumotor problems(fine motor and gross motor). Many times individuals have a combination of disabilities, not just one isolated disability (Wong, 1996).

The field of learning disabilities started in 1963 and it has grown continually since then. The field has expanded enormously with the number of professional journals and organizations devoted to the subject of learning disabilities (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994).

The learning disabilities field of research supports a language-oriented view of learning disabilities, and that phonological processing problems are a cause of the child's reading disability (Mann, 1991). Though some children's problems can also include visual perceptual problems, or the inability of

processing visual information more quickly (Willows, 1991).

Learning disabilities are a lifelong condition which requires a lifetime commitment of understanding the condition and continually learning about it, supporting the research and growing with the knowledge.

Kathleen Nosek (1995) was the executive director of the National Dyslexic Referral Center from 1986 to 1992. She believes in spreading and sharing knowledge about dyslexia so that the children and adults can accept and try to solve problems for the best possible solutions.

Jennifer Bramer (1996) believes it is so important to the students with AD/HD to understand their disorder so that they can self-advocate for themselves as they develop and grow. Students need to start thinking about their needs and must be encouraged as to what can be done to develop their personal goals.

Books can advance this knowledge and understanding, but they are not meant to replace the professional guidance and necessary consultation which a child with learning disabilities needs. The books are meant to be read alone by the child or out loud by an adult. When the parents and child share, then discussions open up that help to raise questions, clarify misunderstandings and share personal insights for everyone's individual growth (Quinn, Stern,1991).

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APPENDIX

Organizations

Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA)
P.O. Box 972
Mentor, OH 44061
Telephone: 216/350-9595 or 800/487-2282

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders (CH.A.D.D.)
499 NW 70th Avenue, Suite 101
Plantation , FL. 33317
Telephone: 954/587-3700 or 800/233-4050

Council For Learning Disabilities(CLD)
P.O. Box 40303
Overland Park, KS 66204
Telephone: 913/492-8755, Fax: 913/492-2546

ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
Telephone: 1-800-328-0272

International Dyslexia Association (IDA, formerly
The Orton Dyslexia Society)
8600 LaSalle Road
Chester Building, Suite 382
Baltimore, MD. 21286-2044
Telephone: (800) 222-3123; (410) 296-0232

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA. 15234
Telephone: (412) 341-1515

National Center for Learning Disabilities
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420
New York, N.Y. 10016

Telephone: (212) 545-7510

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
(NICHCY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, D.C. 20013-1492
Telephone: 1-800-695-0285 (Voice/TT): (202) 884-8200

National Parent Network on Disabilities(NPND)
1727 King Street, Suite 305
Alexandria, VA 22314
Telephone: 703/684-6763, Fax: 703/836-1232, Web: npnd.org

Parents & Educators Resource Center (PERC)
1660 South Amphlett Boulevard, Suite 200
San Mateo, CA. 94402-2508
Telephone: 415/655-2410

Vendors

A.D.D. WareHouse
300 Northwest 70th Avenue, Suite 102
Plantation, FL 33317
Telephone: 1-800-233-9273; Fas: 1-954-792-8545
Internet: www.addwarehouse.com

Paperbacks For Educators
426 West Front Street
Washington, Missouri 63090
Telephone: 1-800-227-2591; Fax 800-514-7323
Internet: http://www.any-book-in-print.com